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SEEKING LIBERTY & JUSTICE

April 23, 2008

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The Honorable Arlen Specter
United States Senate
152 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Specter:

On behalf of the North Carolina Bar Association and its more than 14,000 members, I am writing to urge the United States Congress to fill vacant seats on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit and the Eastern District of North Carolina with jurists from the state of North Carolina.

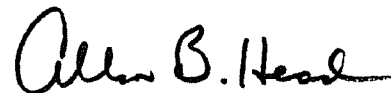
Despite the Fourth Circuit's 33% vacancy rate and overwhelming need for judges, North Carolina is still inadequately represented on the Fourth Circuit. The presence of only one judge from the state of North Carolina on the Fourth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals, even though North Carolina is the most populous and fastest-growing state in the Fourth Circuit, raises concern among the citizens of North Carolina.

More specifically, the Bar Association supports the appointment of Judge Robert J. Conrad, Jr. to the Fourth Circuit and Thomas A. Farr to the Eastern District vacancy. Judge Conrad has been waiting for a hearing for over 270 days; while Judge Farr has been waiting for a hearing for over 500 days. Both nominees are rated "unanimously well qualified" by the American Bar Association and have the strong support of their home state senators. Furthermore, both are nominated to fill judicial emergencies.

In your capacity as Ranking Member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, I am convinced that you understand that our judicial system must provide judicial officers in each jurisdiction, consonant with the state's population and judicial needs, to fulfill its mission of promoting the equitable and effective administration of justice. Toward this end, the North Carolina Bar Association would greatly appreciate your support and leadership on this important issue.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,



Allan B. Head
Executive Director, North Carolina Bar Association

cc: Judge Robert J. Conrad, Jr.
Thomas A. Farr